

What's New in the MPDC

DECEMBER 31, 2001

HOMICIDES ON PACE TO DECLINE IN 2001

With only a few days left in 2001, homicides in DC this year are on pace to decline by approximately 5 percent from the year 2000 total of 242. The 2001 homicide total will represent the lowest number of murders in DC since 1987, when there were 225. (As of December 28, 2001, there were 229 murders in the District.) Following a rise in homicides in September, October and November, the 2001 decline – as high as 30 percent earlier in the year – will end up being smaller than hoped for. Still, the downward movement in DC bucks the trend in other parts of the region and in other large cities, many of which have seen homicide rates increase in 2001. Another encouraging trend: the number of juvenile homicide victims in DC has declined sharply in 2001. As of December 28, there

For a detailed analysis of homicides in DC from 1998 through 2000, check out the MPDC's Murder Analysis report, available in PDF format at:

mpdc.dc.gov/news/pubs/pdf/homicidereport.pdf

were nine homicide victims aged 17 and younger, compared with 17 juvenile victims in 2000 and 28 in 1999. You can always find up-to-date homicide totals, along with other crime statistics, at:

mpdc.dc.gov/info/districts/crstats.shtm

While DC's homicide total will likely reach a 14-year low in 2001, the homicide clearance rate is expected to decline this year as well. As of December 28, the 2001 clearance rate was just under 50 percent, compared with 59 percent in 2000. In a new push to solve more homicides, the MPDC is establishing a centralized Violent Crimes Branch that will investigate homicides, serious shootings and (eventually) sexual assaults on a citywide basis. The new unit, which will be located at the ROC-East headquarters at the Penn-Branch Shopping Center, is scheduled to become operational December 30.

PREVENTING DRUNK DRIVING CRASHES THIS NEW YEAR'S WEEKEND

In an effort to reduce drunk driving and prevent crashes and fatalities, the MPDC is supporting both enforcement and prevention efforts over the long New Year's weekend. The MPDC will conduct sobriety checkpoints at various times and locations throughout the weekend, with the goal of removing drunk drivers from DC streets and highways before they endanger others. The Department, as part of the Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), is also encouraging partygoers who have had too much to drink to take advantage of the regional SoberRide program. Under the program, individuals can get a free taxi ride home, up to a \$50 value, if they feel they have had too much to drink. SoberRide continues every day through 4 am on Wednesday, January 2. For complete details about SoberRide, including restrictions, check out WRAP's Website at:

www.wrap.org/programs_adult1.html

DC follows the stricter .08 BAC (Blood Alcohol Concentration) standard for driving while intoxicated, and the offense carries stiff fines, license revocation and possible jail time. Know the facts about drinking and driving in DC; click on:

mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/duihome.shtm

PHOTO RADAR SHOWING EARLY RESULTS

The latest data on the District's photo radar speeding reduction program show declines in both the number of excessive speeders and the average speed of all motorists, especially those traveling through residential areas. In November 2001, fewer than 22 percent of the vehicles that passed by the photo radar devices were speeding above the violation threshold. That compares with 31 percent of the vehicles monitored in the July warning period and 26 percent of the vehicles observed during August, the first full month the program was operational. In addition, the average speed of all motorists appears to be declining in the photo radar enforcement zones. In 25-mph zones, for example, the average speed has declined from 35.5 mph in July to 29.3 mph in November, a reduction of 17.5 percent. In 30-mph enforcement zones, the average speed of all drivers fell nearly 9 percent, from 37.6 mph in July to 34.3 mph in November. Through November, more than 120,000 photo radar citations had been issued, and close to 46,000 had been paid. For more information about the photo radar program, including the latest results, visit:

DC's red-light camera program, in operation since August 1999, continues to show positive results as well. Through November 2001, there has been a 64 percent reduction in red-light running violations at the intersections with cameras. Learn more about the red-light camera program at:

mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/redlight.shtm

mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/speed.shtm

HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE MPDC! MAKE YOUR PUBLIC SAFETY RESOLUTIONS

Chief Ramsey, the staff of the MPDC's Office of Corporate Communications and the entire Department wish all of our readers a happy and safe New Year. We also ask you and your neighbors to consider making a public safety resolution or two for 2002. Get active in your Police Service Area (PSA). Attend PSA meetings, participate in Partnerships for Problem Solving, maybe start a newsletter or Website for your PSA. Join your local Neighborhood Watch, or start one if your block doesn't have a Watch program. Consider joining the Police Reserve Corps or volunteering for other programs in your community. And, of course, report crime promptly to the police using the appropriate emergency (9-1-1) or non-emergency (3-1-1) number. By working together, we can continue to make our neighborhoods even safer in 2002. Learn more about how you can get involved in "Policing for Prevention" in your community at:

mpdc.dc.gov/pfp/involved.shtm

Information, ideas or comments about this service?

E-mail Kevin Morison, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at kevin.morison@dc.gov.

Would you like to have this information emailed to you? Just go to our web site and register with crimereports.com.

METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT WEB PAGE
MPDC.DC.GOV